

Remarks

Claims 1-19 were pending. Claims 12-19 have been withdrawn from consideration and are hereby canceled without prejudice or disclaimer as being directed to a non-elected invention. Claims 1, 4, and 6 are amended as is described further below. Support for the amendments can be found in the specification, *inter alia*, at page 8, line 29 – page 9, line 2, and Figs. 1-2. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that no new matter has been added. Claims 1-11 are now pending.

Based on the foregoing amendments and the following remarks, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the outstanding rejections and passage of the claims to allowance.

Election/Restrictions

Restriction to one of the following inventions was required under 35 U.S.C. 121:

- I. Claims 1-11, drawn to a process for immersion coating a filament with radiation polymerizable liquid, classified in class 427, subclass 512.
- II. Claims 12-19, drawn to an apparatus for coating a filament and exposing it to actinic radiation, classified in class 118, subclass 620+ or 400+.

During a telephone conversation between the Examiner and the undersigned on May 9, 2006, a provisional election was made without traverse to elect Group I, claims 1-11, for prosecution. Such election is hereby affirmed. Claims 12-19 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer.

§ 112 Rejections

Claims 1-11 were rejected under 35 USC § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicant regards as the invention. Applicant addresses each of the specific objections (see Office Action, pages 3-4) in turn.

Regarding claim 1, the “exposing” step has been amended to recite “exposing said liquid composition at and adjacent said immersed portion.” Thus, Applicant respectfully submits that a person of ordinary skill in the art would readily understand that the liquid is exposed at and near

the immersed portion of the filament. As the claim recites the “immersed portion” it is clear that the exposure occurs while the filament is immersed.

Moreover, the “immersing” step now recites “immersing a portion of a filament in a substantially horizontal orientation to a depth in said liquid composition, the depth being a predetermined distance below a surface of the liquid composition.” Thus, Applicant respectfully submits that a person of ordinary skill in the art would readily understand that a portion of the filament is placed at a particular depth within the liquid composition, where the surface of the liquid provides a definite reference point. Applicant respectfully further submits that a person of ordinary skill in the art would readily understand that since the term used is “immersed,” the entirety (not just the top or bottom) of the portion of the filament is submerged.

Regarding claim 4, the claim has been amended to recite “adjusting said depth the immersed portion of the filament is placed below the surface of the liquid composition.” Thus, Applicant respectfully submits that a person of ordinary skill in the art would readily understand that the adjustment would be accomplished by moving the immersed filament closer to or further from the surface of the liquid composition. Regarding claim 5, the claimed range shows the depth below the surface of the liquid composition that the portion to be exposed is located.

Regarding claim 6, the claim has been amended to recite “focusing radiation from said exposure source in a focal plane, wherein the focal plane of the radiation is located close to the surface of said liquid composition.” (see e.g., support at page 9, lines 8-13) Thus, Applicant respectfully submits that a person of ordinary skill in the art would readily understand that the exposing radiation is focused within a plane – the focal plane, defined in the specification at page 7, line 16 as “[t]he term ‘focal plane’ refers to a spatial area or plane containing a focused image derived from an exposure source.”

Regarding claim 11, Applicant acknowledges that the definition of “aspect ratio” is provided in the specification at page 7, line 27 – the use of the term “aspect ratio” is not meant to be inconsistent with that meaning.

In summary, for at least the reasons above, Applicant submits that the rejection of claims 1-11 under 35 USC § 112, second paragraph, has been overcome, and that the rejection should be withdrawn.

§ 102 Rejections

Claims 1-4 and 10-11 were rejected under 35 USC § 102(b) as being anticipated by Wakabayashi Tetsuo (JP 09-166718). Applicant traverses for the following reasons.

In particular, the cited JP '718 reference does not disclose "exposing said liquid composition at and adjacent said immersed portion to actinic radiation."

In the background section of the present application, Applicant described the JP '718 reference as follows –

Such air entrapment is undesirable and may be overcome according to the method described in Japanese Patent Publication JP 9-166718, which describes a preparatory step of immersion of a portion of stripped optical fiber, in horizontal orientation, in a photopolymerizable coating composition. The stripped portion of optical fiber includes coated boundaries that the coating composition fills during immersion. Preparatory treatment of the stripped portion of optical fiber reduces air entrapment and bubble formation during subsequent recoating by drawing the optical fiber through a pool of the same coating composition contained in a conventional coating die. Exposure to suitable radiation hardens the coating after the recoated optical fiber passes through the coating die.

Thus, the cited JP '718 reference teaches an exposure step after immersion of the fiber, not during an exposure of an immersed fiber, as is recited in the claims. As described in the cited JP '718 reference, exposure/curing occurs during the additional coating and curing step (after the fiber 3 has passed through die 5 and is cured in vessel 9 – see the die apparatus shown in Fig. 3 of the JP '718 reference).

Accordingly, for at least the reasons stated above, claim 1 is novel over the cited JP '718 reference. As dependent claims 2-11 depend from claim 1, these claims are also novel for at least the same reasons. Thus, Applicant respectfully submits that the rejection of claims 1-4 and 10-11 under 35 USC § 102(b) as being anticipated by the cited JP '718 reference (Wakabayashi Tetsuo) has been overcome and should be withdrawn.

Applicant further notes that the cited JP '718 reference was not applied against pending claims 5-9. Also, the Office Action does not particularly cite any reference against claims 5-9. Accordingly, these claims are allowable over the cited references for at least the reasons above.

Conclusion

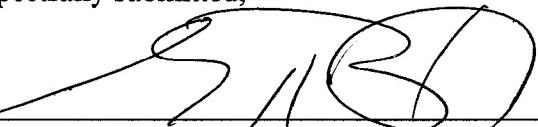
In view of the above, it is submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. Reconsideration of the application is requested. Please contact the undersigned should there be any questions or in order to expedite prosecution.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date

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